



Food Hero for Older Adults

Focus on Vitamin B12



Vitamin B12 helps keep our nerve and blood cells healthy.

B12 is found naturally in animal foods such as meats, poultry, fish, eggs and dairy products.

Some foods, such as breakfast cereals and nutritional yeast, are fortified with added B12.

The recommended daily intake of B12 is 2.4 micrograms (mcg).

Older adults and others at risk for low B12 should include B12-fortified foods to be sure they get enough.

High Protein Banana Split

Makes 2 servings

Prep time: 10 minutes

Ingredients

1 **banana**, cut in half crosswise and again lengthwise

1 cup **Greek yogurt** (plain or flavored)

1 cup whole-grain fortified **cereal** (check the Nutrition Facts label)

1 teaspoon **honey** (optional)

¼ cup sliced **strawberries** (fresh or frozen)

¼ cup canned **pineapple** pieces (fresh or canned in 100% juice and drained)

Directions

1. Place 2 pieces of banana next to each other in each of 2 cereal bowls.
2. Over the banana in each cereal bowl, spoon half the yogurt and sprinkle half the cereal. Drizzle with honey, if desired.
3. Top with fruit and serve.
4. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

Notes

- Try with any fruit, such as blueberries and sliced peaches.
- Look at a cereal's Nutrition Facts label to see if it is fortified with added nutrients such as B12.

Aging and Vitamin B12 Most people get enough vitamin B12 in the food they eat, but starting around age 50, our stomach produces less of the acid and enzymes that help us absorb the B12 in animal foods. The B12 added to fortified foods is easier to absorb. Extra B12 is not considered harmful, but talk to a healthcare provider if you have questions about how much you are getting.



Nutrition Facts

2 servings per container	
Serving size	1/2 banana (222g)
Amount per Serving	
Calories	190
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 1.5g	2%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
<i>Trans Fat</i> 0g	
Cholesterol 5mg	2%
Sodium 110mg	5%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	11%
Dietary Fiber 3g	11%
Total Sugars 15g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 14g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 190mg	15%
Iron 5mg	30%
Potassium 491mg	10%
Vitamin A 142mcg	16%
Vitamin C 22mg	24%
Vitamin B12 1.8mcg	75%

*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Classics Stay Strong

Symptoms of low vitamin B12 include weakness, tingling and numbness in the hands and feet, balance problems, memory loss and depression.

Causes of low B12 include eating little or no animal foods, low stomach acid from aging or medications, and medical conditions affecting the stomach and small intestine.

Talk with your healthcare provider if you have concerns about low vitamin B12.

Look at the Nutrition Facts labels on fortified foods for the mcg and percent Daily Value (%DV) of vitamin B12.

Tuna Veggie Melt

Makes 3 servings **Prep time:** 15 minutes
Cook time: 5 minutes

Ingredients

1 can (5 ounces) **tuna** in water, drained
¼ cup chopped **celery**
1 **green onion**, sliced
½ cup grated **carrot**
1 Tablespoon **mayonnaise**
¼ teaspoon **pepper**
3 whole-wheat **English muffins**
½ cup (2 ounces) grated **cheddar cheese**

Directions

1. In a small bowl, mix tuna, celery, onion, carrot, mayonnaise and pepper.
2. Top each muffin half with tuna mixture and grated cheese.
3. Broil until cheese melts, about 3 minutes.
4. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

Notes

- Use other chopped vegetables such as bell pepper or zucchini.
- Add 1 Tablespoon fortified nutritional yeast for a boost of vitamin B12 and a cheesy, savory flavor.
- Make one serving at a time; store extra tuna mixture in the refrigerator.



Fortified nutritional yeast is a food product that is often fortified with vitamin B12. Sprinkle it on popcorn or rice and beans, or stir it into soup or tuna salad for a savory, cheesy flavor and a boost of vitamin B12. Look for it in the spice or bulk area of your grocery store.



Nutrition Facts

3 servings per container	
Serving size	2 muffin halves (174g)
Amount per Serving	
Calories	300
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 12g	15 %
Saturated Fat 4.5g	23 %
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 35mg	12 %
Sodium 570mg	24 %
Total Carbohydrate 30g	11 %
Dietary Fiber 5g	18 %
Total Sugars 7g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0 %
Protein 20g	
Vitamin D 1mcg	6 %
Calcium 325mg	25 %
Iron 2mg	10 %
Potassium 348mg	8 %
Vitamin A 145mcg	16 %
Vitamin C 2mg	2 %
Vitamin B12 0.5mcg	22 %

*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.